

Bear Creek Watershed Association

Approved June 11, 2014

Policy 28- BCWA Watershed Plan



Statement of Basis and Purpose

The Bear Creek Watershed Association (BCWA) is the local water quality agency responsible for implementation of monitoring and tracking water quality in the Bear Creek Watershed (*BCWA Policy 13 Watershed Boundary*). The BCWA is the implementing management agency for the *Bear Creek Control Regulation No. 74 (5 CCR 1002-74)*.

The BCWA was previously designated as a water quality management agency by the Denver Regional Council of Governments. After DRCOG relinquished the role, the Water Quality Control Division with acceptance by the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission continued to recognize the BCWA as a designated management agency. The WQCD has assumed the role of planning agency for the Denver region, including the entire Bear Creek Watershed. The BCWA now operates under the *Statewide Water Quality Management Plan (SWQMP) (WQCD Version 1.0- June 13, 2011)*. The SWQMP is considered a *living document* with links to other policies and regulations and provides a framework for water quality protection and management. The management agency expectations for the BCWA are outlined in *A Guide to Colorado Programs for Water Quality Management and Safe Drinking Water (Commission Policy #98-2, updated August, 2013)*.

The DRCOG *Clean Water Plan* is no longer a viable water quality management plan. Many of the planning elements required under the federal Clean Water Act 208 planning were maintained within the DRCOG *Clean Water Plan*. The SWQMP doesn't contain the same level of detail as found in the previous *Clean Water Plan*. However, the WQCD as the planning agency still requires the types and detailed information for wastewater and water quality management as maintained by DRCOG. As such, the WQCD expects the BCWA as a management agency to gather and maintain planning elements consistent with 208 planning. The BCWA has generated multiple documents to help replace the *Clean Water Plan*.

The BCWA is now expected to maintain three types of water quality planning documents that serves as:

1. A Water Quality Management Plan for the Bear Creek Watershed as a supplement to the SWQMP and has the type of information previously maintained in the DRCOG *Clean Water Plan* and consistent with federal Clean Water Act 208 planning.
2. A BCWA Watershed Plan consistent with the Environmental Protection Agency nine watershed planning elements and the Colorado watershed plan elements.
3. Support implementation for the *Bear Creek Control Regulation No. 74 (5 CCR 1002-74)*

The supplemental SWQMP documents are expected under state and federal regulations to provide guidance on water quality goals and objectives, the cost of water pollution control and

social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits. The BCWA Watershed Plan provides watershed-specific management strategies and implementation guidance consistent with federal 208 planning. The BCWA Watershed Plan is necessary for obtaining certain state and federal grant funds. The BCWA provides annual reporting to the WQCD and WQCC to demonstrate compliance with state regulations.

A Colorado watershed plan includes eight primary elements. 1) watershed approach with characterization of watershed features and existing regulatory framework, 2) watershed organization and partnerships with rules of operation, 3) Pollutants of concern and scope or extent of watershed efforts with vision, mission, goals and objectives, 4) watershed information, monitoring plan and data types and inventories, 5) data analyses, load reduction strategies and characterizations, 6) watershed management action strategies, policies and supported programs, 7) implementation plan, measures of success and TMDL elements, and 8) adaptive watershed management process. The BCWA Watershed Plan is designed to meet these required elements of a Colorado watershed plan.

The BCWA has determined and as established in this policy that generating a single document to serve the watershed planning elements is not practical or efficient process. A single or fixed watershed plan would be too inflexible and require frequent updating. The BCWA instead is using a flexible and adaptive watershed planning process maintained electronically and assessable on a designated BCWA Web site. The electronic watershed plan is a BCWA Watershed Plan table of contents with linked PDF files or spreadsheets, and program element descriptions. The BCWA Watershed Plan is designed to be flexible, adaptive and dynamic. The online watershed plan will contain elements and information required to meet all three types of water quality planning reporting.

The BCWA has adopted a series of policies, technical reports and factsheets that define the program. The BCWA develops and distributes a number of educational and outreach materials to serve the watershed community. The BCWA maintains a series of standardized maps providing watershed information and characterization. The BCWA maintains sets of water quality and other environmental data in spreadsheets and data reports. The BCWA produces annual reports to meet regulatory reporting requirements. The compilation of the various BCWA watershed planning documents and databases meets the state and Environmental Protection Agency requirements for a complete watershed plan.

Policy Positions

1. The BCWA Watershed Plan is comprised of multiple documents maintained on the Association Web site (www.bearcreekwatershed.org) and the designated Web site as part of the ACM DSS online management process (BCWA Policy 21 – Online Management Process).
2. The BCWA membership and manager will utilize the online management process to help administer the BCWA Watershed Plan.
3. The BCWA Watershed Plan is an electronic version based of an expanded table of contents that meets expectations of all three water quality planning types with linked documents that are specific to a designated topic or element.

*Bear Creek Watershed Association
32-years of Watershed Management*

4. The BCWA Watershed Plan is adaptive and updated by designated managers on an ongoing basis, after approval or acceptance by the Association Board of policies or sensitive materials.
5. Annually, the BCWA, at a Technical Review Session, will review the BCWA Watershed Plan and determine if any changes, fixes, updates or additions are necessary or warranted.